

District Survey Form

JUL 30 1984

1 <u>DISTRICT</u> Highland Boulevard Historic District		<u>SURVEYOR</u> DCD	<u>SHSW STAFF</u>
<u>CITY</u> Milwaukee	<u>COUNTY</u> Milwaukee	<u>SURVEY</u> West Side	<u>DATE</u> Spring, 1984

FILM ROLLS/NEGATIVES

<u>STREETS:</u>	<u>NUMBERS:</u>	<u>STREETS:</u>	<u>NUMBERS:</u>
See Attached			

2 BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The boundaries of the Highland Boulevard Historic District are described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of West Highland Boulevard and North 29th Street; then south along the west curb line of 29th Street to the alley between Highland Boulevard and West State Street; then west to the west property line of 3301 West Highland Boulevard; then north to the north curb line of Highland Boulevard; then west to the west property line of 3306 West Highland Boulevard; then north to the alley; then east to the centerline of North 33rd Street; then south to the north curb line of Highland Boulevard; then east to the west property line of 3112 West Highland Boulevard; then north to the alley; then east to the east property line of 3030 West Highland Boulevard; then south to the north curb line of Highland Boulevard; then east to the point of beginning, in the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin.

3 BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION The district includes only the remaining mansions and large-scale houses on both sides of Highland Boulevard between North 29th and North 33rd Streets. Highland Boulevard is distinguished from the adjacent neighborhoods by a landscaped esplanade down the center of the roadway. The residences, some of monumental proportions, are sited on expansive lots with broad setbacks. To the north, the residential fabric changes to modest dwellings on small lots; to the east, Highland has been intruded upon by a series of contemporary 1960s apartment buildings which replaced the original fabric; to the west, the same has occurred with public housing and nursing homes; to the south is the Concordia Historic District which is a residential neighborhood of smaller scale houses.

- 4** SOURCES OF INFORMATION
- A. City of Milwaukee Building Permits (1896) General Ordinances of the City of Milwaukee, Chapter 25, Sec. 61-66, pp. 734-35.
 - B. Milwaukee, Chapter 24, Sec. 79-83, pp. 230-31.
 - C. Milwaukee City Directories, 1894-1930.
 - D. Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission
 - E. Department of City Development, Milwaukee (unpublished research files)

5 MAP REFERENCE Acreage: 7.8 acres
 USGS quad: SW/4 Milwaukee 15 min.
 scale: 1:24,000

<u>UTM references:</u>	
A. 16422620/476 ⁶⁰ 00	I. 16422460/4766090
B. 16422620/4765960	J. 16422460/4766000
C. 16422180/4765970	K.
D. 16422180/4766100	L.
E. 16422240/4766090	M.
F. 61422240/4766000	N.
G. 16422350/4766000	O.

6 OPINION OF NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY
 date: 10/84 initials: DCD

eligible not eligible unknown
 national state local



HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION
 STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
 WISCONSIN

Rec'd JUN 27 1985

7 Description

General character, building types, styles, environment, important natural and man-made features, qualities that distinguish district from surroundings, nature of intrusions and generally excepted properties.

HIGHLAND BOULEVARD HISTORIC DISTRICT

General Character:

The Highland Boulevard Historic District includes parts of the street between North 29th and North 33rd Streets. It contains the largest concentration of mansions and residences remaining on the street. The district is situated in the west-central part of the survey area on flat, even terrain. It is distinguished by a forty-foot-wide, landscaped esplanade down the middle of the roadway and long unbroken blocks that allowed the exceptionally large lots to be developed. The boulevard plan was an intentional effort by the Milwaukee Common Council to create public thruways that would prohibit undesirable traffic and create links to parks and other parkways. Originally the boulevard began at North 27th Street and ended at North 35th Street. Later it was extended west of 35th Street to North 40th Street where it curved northward to West Vliet Street at the south entrance of Washington Park. To emphasize the change in character, Highland is referred to as an "avenue" east of North 27th Street and as a "boulevard" west of 27th Street. In the 1960s, Highland from 27th Street to North 12th Street was significantly widened and a similar landscaped esplanade was constructed down the middle of the roadway.

The district was originally an exclusive neighborhood of high style, single-family homes. Almost all have been converted to other uses, including rooming houses, office buildings, institutions, and fraternity houses. The district still retains a residential character in spite of these changes. The district is comprised of 20 buildings with four structures in residential use, six as institutions, three as fraternity houses, and one as an office building. There are also four carriage barns and two non-contributing buildings. The street remained fairly intact until the 1940s when many of the larger residences were converted to rooming houses and institutional uses. In the 1960s large segments of Highland, particularly between North 27th and North 29th Streets, were demolished for modern apartment buildings. This also occurred at the west end of Highland where public housing, a number of nursing homes, and a modern social welfare agency facility were built.

The intact part of Highland Boulevard which has been defined as the district clearly exhibits the character that the street once had at its peak as an exclusive residential neighborhood. The district was built over a period of about 30 years. The district developed in two phases from 1895 to 1915, and after World War I to the mid-1920s. In the first period the most elaborate mansions and largest houses were built. These residences exhibited the highest quality design and craftsmanship situated on estate-size lots of up to one acre. These larger parcels were made possible because Highland was only bisected twice by cross-streets, once at North 29th Street and again at North 33rd Street. The mansions were generally 2-1/2 to 3 stories in height and were constructed exclusively of brick and stone and embellished with carved stone and terra cotta ornament. Historic photographs and the 1910 Sanborn and Perris Fire Insurance maps show that the street was built to nearly 80% of capacity before the start of World War I. In the second period of development the remaining lots were filled with considerably smaller scale houses that, nevertheless, continued the high levels of architectural design demonstrated by the earlier houses.

8 Significance

Areas of significance

architecture: Late Nineteenth century/
Early Twentieth century

history: Community planning/landscape
architecture. Development
of a unique residential area
associated with significant
persons.

Period of significance: 1895-1930

Historical development and statement of significance.

Statement of Significance

The Highland Boulevard Historic District is significant both for its architectural and its historical associations. It is architecturally significant for its excellent examples of late nineteenth and twentieth century domestic architecture. It is historically significant as part of an early city planning phenomenon which created a system of landscaped boulevards to serve as links between the major parks and to beautify the city's residential areas. This resulted in residential streets that were distinctive from the established grid and attracted the highest quality residential construction. The city's boulevard plan was the antecedent to Milwaukee's county-wide park and parkway system, one of the most extensive in the nation. Also, the district is historically important as the home of wealthy German-American businessmen who made outstanding contributions to the development of the city during the district's period of significance.

Architecture

Architecturally, the Highland Boulevard Historic District is significant for its excellent late nineteenth and early twentieth century mansions and high style residences that were built during the district's primary period of development between 1895 and 1925. The architecture includes the Neoclassical, Beaux Arts Classicism, French Renaissance, Georgian Revival, Bungalow, Craftsman and Prairie. The architecture also illustrates how Milwaukee's German-born and trained architects interpreted the aesthetic needs for substantial, solid-looking, well-constructed buildings that often incorporated German Renaissance Revival motifs. The scale and quality craftsmanship of the residences clearly distinguishes the district from the great body of West Side architecture that encompasses its. The list of architects who designed houses in the district were among the city's prominent firms of the period and included: Herman W. Buecking, Edward V. Koch, Carl Barkhausen, George B. Ferry and Alfred C. Clas, and Max Ferneckes and Walter S. Dolliver.

The mansions in the district are exceptional examples of the large in-city estates that were developed at the end of the nineteenth century. The Fred Pabst, Jr. House (1897) at 3112 West Highland (MI 108-10) is a Neoclassical residence that ranks among the finest houses in the city. Set amidst spacious grounds, it is constructed of pale yellow pressed brick, trimmed with Indiana limestone with a colossal Ionic order portico of four columns each of which is carved from a single block of stone. At the rear of the estate is a massive two-story carriage barn of the same architectural style.

In contrast to the Fred Pabst, Jr. House, its neighbor the Gustav Pabst House (1897), located directly east at 3030 West Highland (MI 108-7) is executed in the French Renaissance Revival style. Designed by eminent Milwaukee architects George B. Ferry and Alfred C. Clas, the chateausque mansion exhibits the continued preference of Milwaukee's wealthy German-Americans for European-inspired architectural styles. At the rear of this property is a magnificent carriage house designed in the same French Renaissance Revival.

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The two largest mansions remaining on the street are located in the district on the north side of Highland Boulevard. Both date from the earlier period of development when mansion building dominated construction on the street. They are each sited on expansive grounds of up to one acre with elaborate carriage barns reached by side drives from the street. On the south side of Highland are large-scale houses built before World War I and those smaller houses built after the war. Some of these also had elaborate carriage house/garages on their larger than an average city lots.

Generally, the houses are sited on the front half of the lot with ample front yards and extensive backyards. Formal landscaping is limited primarily to foundation shrubbery and an occasional mature deciduous or conifer tree. Between the front walk and the curb is a parkway that was once planted with an extensive row of majestic elm trees. Dutch elm disease killed these trees and the easement is now planted with maple and locust trees. The esplanade is a grassy area that is planted with trees and formal bush and flower combinations to produce a park-like setting.

Architectural Character

The architectural character of the district is determined by the mix of late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential structures that range from opulent mansions to high style bungalows. The styles represented in the district include the Neoclassical, Beaux Arts Classicism, French Renaissance, Georgian Revival, Bungalow, Craftsman and Prairie styles. Also, a significant number of the residences incorporate German Renaissance Revival motifs into the designs. This was a common occurrence in Milwaukee neighborhoods of well-to-do German-Americans whose nostalgia for the "old country" was expressed in their homes. Styles were selected that would display to society the owner's good taste as well as his prosperity. The Gustav Pabst House (1897) at 3030 West Highland (MI 108-7), for example, was executed in the high fashion French Renaissance Revival style popularized by eastern millionaires such as the Vanderbilt family. Next door to it, the Fred Pabst, Jr. House (1897) at 3112 West Highland is a mansion of equal scale and quality, but was designed in the imposing Neoclassical style which was also popular for regal residences. Another important high style residence, though of smaller proportions, is the individualistic Beaux Arts style George Koch House (1897) at 3209 West Highland (MI 123-27), one of the few residences of this style in the city.

The other houses found in the district often incorporate definite German Renaissance Revival motifs such as the William Starke House (1901) at 2929 West Highland (MI 123-18) and the H. August Luedke House (1915) at 3109 West Highland (MI 123-25), both of which are embellished with Flemish gables decorated with carved stone and terra cotta. A rare example of the Georgian Revival style is the William D. Lindsay House (1901) at 2923 West Highland (MI 123-16). In general, the Georgian Revival style was not very popular in Milwaukee and there are relatively fewer examples than in many other American cities.

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Among the later styles to be built in the district were the Bungalow and Prairie styles. One of the city's few high style bungalows is the Louis J. Stroble House (c. 1917) at 3101 West Highland (MI 123-23). A fine example of a Prairie-influenced residence is the George Weinhagen House (1911) at 3306 West Highland (MI 108-15).

Pivotal/Contributing/Non-Contributing Buildings - Highland Boulevard Historic District

The attached list classifies all of the buildings in the district as pivotal, contributing, or non-contributing buildings.

Pivotal buildings are structures that fall within the period of significance for the district, which was from 1895 to 1930 when it was a prestigious residential area, and are essential to the maintenance of the district's historical character. Generally, these are the most representative or architecturally distinguished buildings, and/or possess the greatest known historical significance.

Contributing buildings are structures that were built within the districts period of significance and contribute to the historic character of the district as representative examples of the architecture of the period and/or for their associations with people or events of minor or unknown historical significance.

Non-contributing buildings are structures constructed after the district's period of significance and that do not contribute to the maintenance of the historic significance of the district. Generally these buildings are intrusions whose removal would not adversely affect the character of the district. There are two non-contributing buildings in the district:

3017 West Highland Boulevard (1964)

A three-story, flat-roofed, stone, wood and brick, 27 unit, apartment building of modern design.

3229 West Highland Boulevard (c.1970)

A two-story, flat-roofed, brick, day care center of modern design.

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A third significant mansion in the district is the unique George Koch House (1897) at 3209 West Highland (MI 123-27). Almost a miniature of the traditional, large-scale Beaux Arts classic buildings, it is a finely detailed composition that is attentive to the style's principal motifs. The main floor of this unusual little villa is raised on a high basement and is flanked by paired Corinthian columns with a modillioned cornice and balustrade encircling the entire structure. At the base of the entry are two carved stone lions on plinths.

As the district continued to develop in the early twentieth century, less ostentatious residences were built on the remaining lots. These were the expensive homes of upper income German-American business executives. Among the examples, are the William Starke House (1901) at 2929 West Highland (MI 123-18) and the H. August Luedke House (1915) at 3109 West Highland (123-25), both of which exhibit Arts and Crafts Style influences in their designs, the Bungalow Style, Louis J. Strobel House (c. 1917) at 3101 West Highland (MI 123-23) and the Prairie Style, George Weinhagen House (1911) at 3306 West Highland (MI 108-15). The popular Mediterranean style of the late teens and twenties is represented in the Otto F. Priebe House (1926) at 3301 West Highland (MI 123-31).

Community Planning and Landscape Architecture

The establishment of the boulevard system in Milwaukee served several civic purposes. As needed landscaped public open areas, they provided breathing space in densely-built residential areas and served as linkage between the municipal parks. By prohibiting undesirable traffic they encouraged a better class of residential construction along their lengths. Designated by Common Council Ordinance, the boulevards had landscaped esplanades down the middle of the roadway, and vehicles carrying heavy loads, such as building materials, dirt, manure, and farm produce were banned from using them. The esplanades were constructed at the expense of the abutting property owners, but subsequent improvements and maintenance was undertaken by the City Department of Public Works.

The boulevard plan was one of the more ambitious early efforts at city beautification by the municipal government. Seen as an adjunct to the establishment of the municipal park system that had begun with the construction of Washington Park (1892) on the West Side and Lake Park (1895) on the upper East Side, the Common Council declared Highland Avenue between North 27th and North 35th Streets as the city's first boulevard in 1896. It was later extended westward to provide a pleasant, landscaped route from the main population center of the West Side to the south entrance of Washington Park.

The next boulevards created after Highland were McKinley Boulevard between North 27th and North 35th Streets, and Newberry Boulevard between Lake and Riverside Parks in 1906. Both figured prominently in achieving the city's goal of creating much needed open space in the tightly developed street grid that had resulted from the city's pre-Civil War subdivision codes.

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These first boulevards were the precedent for the county-wide park, parkway, and boulevard system proposed and executed under the guidance of Charles B. Whitnall after 1923. As a result of his efforts, Milwaukee has one of the largest systems of parks, parkways, and boulevards of any major city in the country.

A characteristic common to all of the boulevards with landscaped esplanades, was their development into exclusive residential streets lined with costly residences. This created unique pockets within the established street grid that could be distinguished from the adjacent residential areas. Highland Boulevard was no exception to this phenomenon.

A Unique Residential Area Associated with Significant Persons

Highland Boulevard was without question the premier residential street of the West Side's German-American community. It stands apart as uniquely different from other German-American residential enclaves such as McKinley Boulevard. Its residents, more than just wealthy businessmen, made important contributions to the economic development of Milwaukee during the district's period of significance. Because of the district's overwhelmingly German-American composition, it was informally known as "Sauerkraut Boulevard." Most of the district residents had their offices in or near the central business district and because of their high economic status could afford to live a great distance from their jobs in the then suburban setting of Highland Boulevard. The residents were among the wealthiest people in the city and could reach their places of employment by private coach or automobile. The families who lived in the district were either German immigrants who had established successful businesses within a generation of settlement in Milwaukee or they were second or third generation German-Americans who were the children of some of Milwaukee's most prominent early industrialists.

Among the important residents of the district were Gustav Pabst, who lived at 3030 West Highland, and his younger brother, Fred Pabst, Jr., who lived at 3112 West Highland. They were sons of Captain Frederick Pabst, Milwaukee's premier nineteenth century brewer. The Captain remained president of the Pabst Brewery until his death in 1904. In that year Gustav was named president and Fred Jr., vice president of the company. Fred Jr. resigned from the brewery in 1908 to devote himself to animal husbandry at the Pabst Farms in Oconomowoc. When Gustav retired as president in 1921, Fred returned to the brewery at its president and chairman of the board until he retired in the early 1950s.

Other business executives who lived in the district were William D. Lindsay, one of the few non-German residents, at 2923 West Highland, president of Lindsay Brothers, manufacturers of agricultural implements; William Starke at 2929 West Highland, president of Lake Michigan Dredge and Dock Company; Louis Stroble at 3101 West Highland, secretary of Wisconsin Grocer Company; H. August Luedke at 3109 West Highland, vice-president of Pritzlaff Hardware Company; and George Weinhagen at 3306 West Highland, vice-president and treasurer of the A. George Schulz Company, manufacturers of paper and folding boxes.

Highland Boulevard Historic District Pivotal Structures

West Highland Boulevard

2923	123/17
2929	123/18
3030	108/7
	108/9
3101	123/23
3109	123/25
3112	108/10
3209	108/12
	123/27
3306	108/15

Highland Boulevard Historic District Inventory

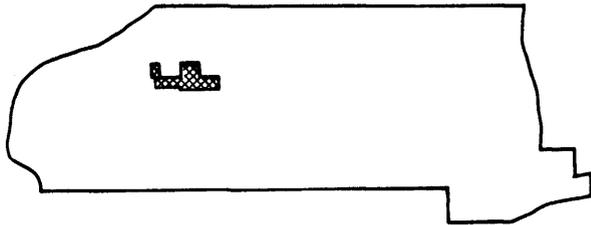
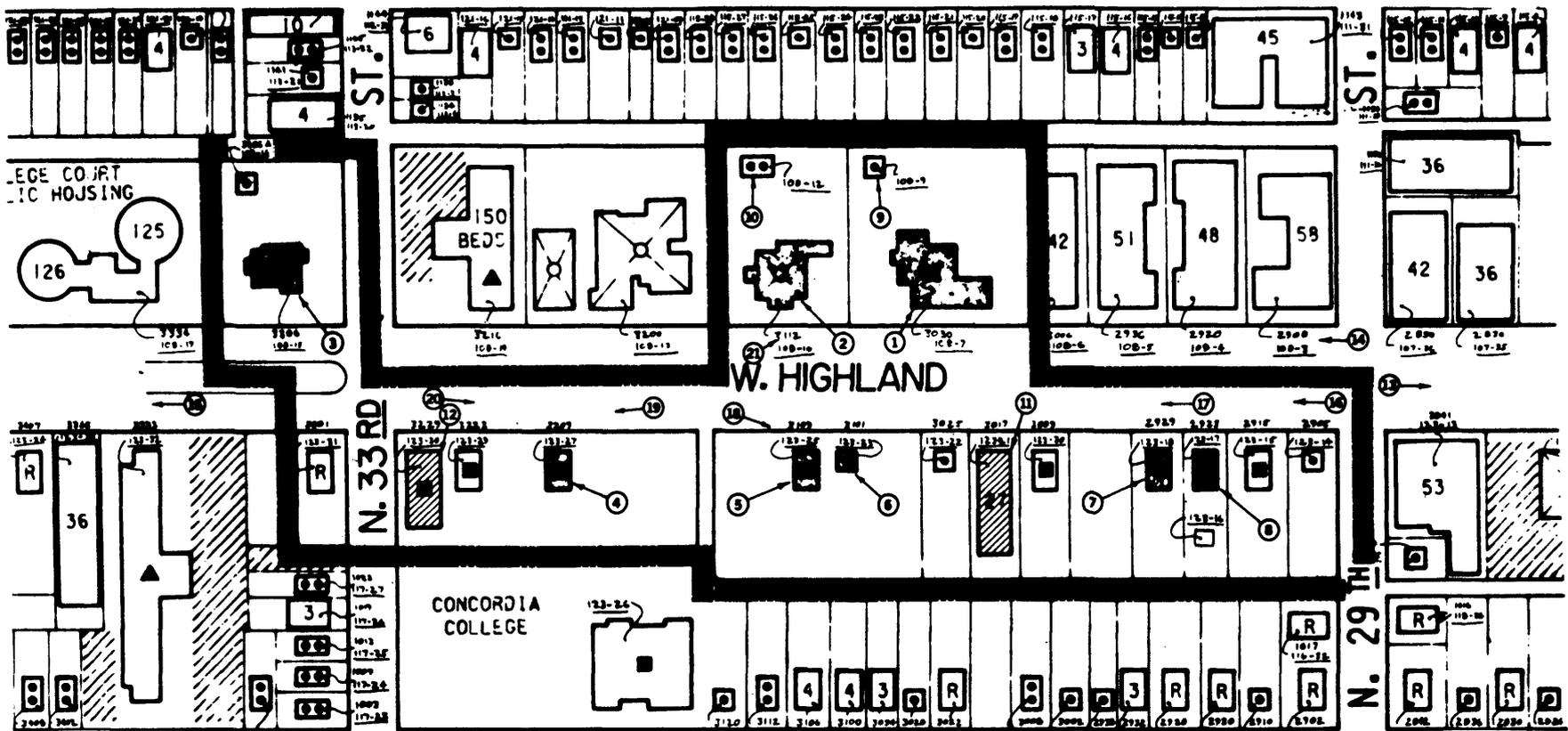
West Highland Boulevard

2905	C	123/14
2915	C	123/15
2923	P	123/17
2929	P	123/18
3009	C	123/20
3017	N	123/21
3025	C	123/22
3030	P	108/7
	P	108/9
3101	P	123/23
3109	P	123/25
3112	P	108/10
	P	108/10
3209	P	123/27
3223	C	123/29
3229	N	123/30
3301	C	123/31
3306	P	108/15

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Continued)

F. Milwaukee Society Blue Books, 1896-1911.

G. Sanborn and Perris Map Company. "Insurance Maps of Milwaukee." 1894, 1910.



LEGEND (WITHIN BOUNDARY)

-  PIVOTAL STRUCTURE
-  CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE
-  NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE
-  PHOTO CODE
-  ADDRESS

HIGHLAND BOULEVARD HISTORIC DISTRICT